



## MESSAGES TO SHARE

Below are sample messages to be shared on social media or as Plan of the Week notes aligned with Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence's prevention efforts:

1. Substance misuse can not only impact sexual decision-making, but it also can impair sexual function. Keeping substances out of the equation when engaging in sexual activity helps keep you and your partner safe and healthy. April is Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's Sexual Health Month. Their toolbox at [go.usa.gov/xEGJ9](https://go.usa.gov/xEGJ9) contains helpful resources and information to protect your sexual health.
2. April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Worried about your drinking habits or thinking about changing them? Find helpful resources and tips at [OwnYourLimits.org](https://OwnYourLimits.org). The Own Your Limits Campaign site has tips and tools to help moderate your drinking habits and drink more responsibly.
3. The next Prescription Drug Take Back Day is April 24. Find a safe and convenient way to dispose of old and expired prescription drugs and keep yourself and family safe. Visit [go.usa.gov/xEAMy](https://go.usa.gov/xEAMy). Not sure you can participate in Take Back Day? Check with your local Military Treatment Facility to see if they offer year-round safe disposal via a drop box!
4. There is no shame in reaching out for help. If you are struggling with mental health, there are resources available that provide 24/7 support. Call Military OneSource for confidential counseling at 1-800-342-9647. The Military Crisis Line also provides confidential support by phone at 1-800-273-8255 (press 1) or text at 838255.

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## SAFELY IMPROVING SEXUAL FUNCTION

Opioid and stimulant misuse in the U.S. is well-known, but another class of medications is increasingly being used recreationally. Erectile dysfunction (ED) medications like Sildenafil (Viagra®), Tadalafil (Cialis®) and Vardenafil (Levitra®) are used — often without a prescription — to improve sexual function, and their “herbal” counterparts are often seen as a safer alternative. Like opioids, stimulants and certain “natural” supplements, however, improper use of these substances all carry significant health risks.



### Drug Interactions

Over 50 drugs are known to be contraindicated with the use of ED medications due to risk of dangerous cardiovascular events and potential overdose. Adverse **interactions** can occur with medications to treat hypertension, HIV and fungal infections as well as nitrites (for chest pain and also found in “**poppers**”) and alpha blockers. In addition, even grapefruit juice and alcoholic beverages should be avoided if taking ED medications.

### STI Risk

Recreational use of ED medications has been associated with increased risk of sexually transmitted infection (STI), especially among men who have sex with men. A **review** of studies examining recreational Sildenafil users found them to be two to six times more likely to engage in unsafe sexual practices compared to non-users. Over half also added other drugs to enhance the sexual experience, and newly HIV-infected men in this review were 2.5 times as likely to use Sildenafil.

### Risks of Natural and Herbal Remedies

“Natural” or “herbal” ED remedies may be tempting, but these supplements are not subject to the standards and testing prescription medications are, plus, they may contain ingredients not listed on the label. Some contain substances that improve blood flow by relaxing blood vessel walls, but unlike prescription medications, they do not focus on specific blood vessels and can cause dangerously **low** blood pressure.

### How to Safely Improve Sexual Functioning

If concerned about ED, it's best to consult a doctor to rule out underlying health issues or other prescription medications as a cause. Losing weight, quitting smoking and limiting alcohol are all positive **steps** to improve sexual function and overall health. **Evidence** also shows moderate caffeine intake may improve sexual function. If your provider determines a prescription medication is a preferable course of action, be sure—as always—to disclose all medications and supplements that you are taking and ask about potential side effects.

# Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence Newsletter



SERVING PROUD • SERVING DRUG FREE

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## RESOURCES TO DRINK RESPONSIBLY

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, and it's important Sailors and other Service members know how to make responsible choices if they choose to drink alcohol. The Defense Department's education campaign **Own Your Limits** provides Service members with information and resources on topics such as responsible drinking, risks of alcohol misuse and how to stick to safe and moderate drinking limits. The campaign features many resources for use by professionals such as ADCOs and DAPAs. They include:

- **Campaign Overview Video** - Learn about the campaign and its resources.
- **Free Print and Promotional Materials** - Order materials to support alcohol prevention and education efforts at your base or command.
- **Drinking Habits Quiz** - Promote this tool to Sailors and other Service members so they can anonymously check their drinking habits and commit to drinking responsibly.
- **The Buzz on Responsible Drinking** - Subscribe and utilize this quarterly e-Newsletter to get the latest on the campaign and resources.
- **Articles, Infographics, and Fact Sheets** - Download, print, or link to these resources so Sailors and other Service members can get the latest information and tips on drinking responsibly.
- **Facebook and Instagram** - Share engaging graphics and information with Sailors and other Service members so they can connect with the campaign and the military community.

Visit <https://www.ownyourlimits.org> to find resources that you can share with Sailors and other Service members about the effects of alcohol, the consequences of drinking too much, tips for cutting back, and ways to find help. If you have questions or need more information, the campaign can be reached at: [dha.ncr.comm.mbx.drink-responsibly@mail.mil](mailto:dha.ncr.comm.mbx.drink-responsibly@mail.mil).

# OWN YOUR LIMITS

## CURRENT & UPCOMING EVENTS

### APRIL DDD WEBINARS

Each webinar is scheduled for  
1000-1130 CT and 1700-1830 CT.

- 1— IFTDTL First Time Users Guide/Portal Milestones/End of FY Reports
- 8— Command Approved Aftercare
- 15— RESFOR Dialogue/Addressing Issues Involving the Portal & WebDTP
- 22— IFTDTL Reports and Portal Navigation
- 29— Screening Refusal

Learn more and stay up-to-date by visiting  
[www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/21st-Century-Sailor/Drug-Detection-Deterrence/](http://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/21st-Century-Sailor/Drug-Detection-Deterrence/)

### ADAMS FOR LEADERS & DAPA COURSES

Can be accessed using your CAC by logging in to Catalog of Navy Training Courses (CANTRAC) at  
[app.prod.cetars.training.navy.mil/cantrac/vol2.html](http://app.prod.cetars.training.navy.mil/cantrac/vol2.html)

### NMCPHC SEXUAL HEALTH MONTH

April  
Find the toolbox at [go.usa.gov/xEGJ9](http://go.usa.gov/xEGJ9).

### ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

April

## CELEBRATING MILITARY CHILDREN

Since established in 1986, the Month of the Military Child has highlighted the important role military children play in the armed forces community. Each April, the Department of Defense Military Community and Family Policy sponsors the month to acknowledge and applaud the daily sacrifices and challenges military children overcome in the U.S. and overseas.

Amid the many unique challenges they face, military children and youth also face the growing pains that most youth face. The Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) program helps military children ages nine through 12 develop leadership skills and build confidence and character to lead healthy and drug-free lives.

To learn more about DEFY, contact the program office by phone at (901) 874-3300 or email at [MILL\\_N17\\_DEFY@navy.mil](mailto:MILL_N17_DEFY@navy.mil), or visit online at [www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/21st-Century-Sailor/Drug-Detection-Deterrence/Drug-Education/](http://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/21st-Century-Sailor/Drug-Detection-Deterrence/Drug-Education/).